

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY  
TRANSPORTATION SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT POLICY

HRM LETTER NO. 300-7

DATE: July 15, 2003

**SUBJECT:** Interim Policy on Providing Employment References for Current or Former TSA Employees

**General rule.** TSA supervisors and others identified as employment references by current or former TSA employees may confirm employment status and may identify the individual's title, job description, pay band, duty stations, and performance elements. Comments should be limited to general observations about the individual's performance based on personal experience and observation, and not information contained in the individual's official personnel records.

**Protection of Privacy Act Information.** The Privacy Act generally prohibits the disclosure of information from the individual's official personnel records, such as any disciplinary action taken and the specifics of any unfavorable performance review (e.g., that the individual was given an "unsatisfactory" in two annual reviews).

**Exceptions.** This general prohibition on disclosure of personnel information does not apply when:

1. The employee/former employee consents to the release of such information, preferably in writing; OR
2. The inquiring entity is another agency of the U.S. Government (executive, judicial, or legislative branch).

When one of these conditions for exception is met, supervisors and others identified as employment references may comment on disciplinary and/or performance information in the employee's official personnel file. However, negative references based upon an employee's real or perceived EEO, grievance, or whistleblowing activity should never be given.

**Points-of-Contact.** Supervisors and others identified as employment references should consult with their local servicing HR Specialist and/or Attorney if they have questions.



for

Richard A. Whitford  
Assistant Administrator for Human Resources

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